



# What's on Tap

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## Cleaning Water Storage Tanks

### What is the Purpose of a Water Storage Tank?

Covington Water District has several water storage tanks located at the elevation high points within the District boundaries. The primary purpose of a storage tank is twofold, storing water for domestic supply (customers) during peak hours of use, and providing a large volume of water in a short period of time for fighting fires.

### Why is it Important to Clean the Outside of a Storage Tank?

There is a specialized coating system on the exterior of the storage tanks that protect the steel structure underneath. Although very robust at the time of application (painting), the coating system will breakdown over its expected life span due to age and the elements of nature. Although we cannot control the weather, we can do our best to keep the tanks clean by removing oxidation and foreign growth such as algae to maximize the life span of the coating.

### How Do You Clean a Storage Tank?

In most cases the storage tanks are cleaned using a mechanical boom lift for access and a pressure washer for cleaning.

### Does the District Clean the Inside of the Storage Tanks?

Yes. There are basically two methods for cleaning the inside of a storage tank. One is to drain the tank, perform the cleaning similar to the exterior (pressure washing), and inspect the interior coating. The other is to keep the tank full of water and send in specialized divers who "vacuum" the floor of the tank and perform an inspection of the coating. The divers and equipment are held to strict disinfection and safety standards to perform this work.

### Who Do I Call with Questions?

Please contact Mike Amburgey, Operations Manager, at 253-867-0950 if you would like to learn more about this maintenance program.



## Budget Process and Rate Setting Criteria

Annually the Covington Water District (CWD) embarks upon one of its major financial activities – the preparation, evaluation, and adoption of the subsequent year water rates and operating and capital expenditures. While there is no statutory (legal) requirement that a water district adopt a budget, CWD does prepare a 6-year financial plan that assists with the development and ongoing monitoring of expenditures as it is the lynchpin of a sound financial management program.

While adopted on an annual basis, development and setting of rates requires both a short and long-term perspective. The objective is to consider all of the elements necessary to ensure that the water system's infrastructure is functioning efficiently and that it is fully capable of delivering a safe, reliable water source 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, year after year. Criteria which are evaluated include but are not limited to system maintenance, water quality testing, debt service payments, affordability, revenue stability, Reserve Accounts funding, and beginning cash balances. Factors such as weather and emerging regulatory requirements are also given ample consideration.

Initial steps are currently underway with the focus chiefly on development of the 2016 water consumption forecast. We anticipate discussions with the Board to commence in October with a December target date for adoption. The public is invited to attend the Board meetings and provide comment. Board meeting agendas are posted on our website at [www.covingtonwater.com](http://www.covingtonwater.com)

## Dual Meters and Timing of Connection Charge Payments

After considerable discussion and deliberation, the Board of Water Commissioners approved two policy changes earlier this year which has a bearing on existing customers and developers/builders.

The first policy change rescinds the required installation of dual meters for all new residential construction. Residential customers with a single meter service are not impacted by this policy action.

Residential customers with an existing dual meter service will notice a change in their water billing effective with the billing statements generated after March 6, 2015. All water usage (both inside and outside meter use) will be combined and billed at the single meter service rate. To illustrate using summer rates with 8 CCF indoor meter use and 4 CCF outdoor meter use (excluding the flat rate charge):

- Prior Policy \$56.40 (water consumption charge only)
- New Policy \$38.20 (water consumption charge only)

The second policy revision requires that connection charge payments are to be paid in full prior to the meter drop/installation. Previously connection charges were to be paid in full prior to acceptance of the District's System Extension Agreement, the timing of which occurred much earlier in the development process.

## Meter Replacement Project Update

In 2009, the District initiated a Meter Replacement Program with the objective of replacing the approximately 10,000 remaining manual read meters installed throughout the District with radio read meters. The project is nearly complete and will be considered finished this summer when the few remaining large meters are replaced. Radio read meters provide the advantage of being able to collect mobile "drive-by" meter readings which saves time, thereby allowing the District to focus on other activities such as meter box maintenance.

